

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **ISWA Announces New Task Force on Marine Litter** ISWA and International Experts Join Forces at UN to #SaveOurOcean

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**Vienna, Austria** – June 8<sup>th</sup> 2017 is #WorldOceanDay and ISWA is delighted to announce its intention to play a major role in the urgent microplastic emergency threatening our oceans with the launch of its new global initiative – a Task Force on Marine Litter.

This week, ISWA's Task Force on Marine Litter is being represented by its Chair, Dr Costas Velis at the United Nations Ocean Conference New York. Joined by representatives from [Let's Do it](#), UNEP and the Minister of Environment for Estonia, Costas Velis said in a joint session at the conference: *"ISWA is determined to work with international stakeholders to solve marine litter at source. Reliable data lets us formulate the right messages for policy making to tackle marine pollution"*.

ISWA's Task Force is a response to the Sustainable Development Goal 14 "Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development" and a follow-up to some of the findings in the pioneering UNEP/ISWA [Global Waste Management Outlook report](#).

ISWA aims to establish and exemplify the fundamentally positive role sound management of waste and resources can have in the medium and long term towards mitigating and eventually resolving plastic marine pollution.

Antonis Mavropoulos, ISWA President is calling for more and better science to understand the problem *"We need to understand the material flows, and combine them with material properties, exposures and risks: in short, we need to identify where the major leakages and hazards occur, and then prioritize fixing them, starting from the genuinely major ones. Open dumping of solid waste in rivers and waterways is, most possibly, a major pathway"*

ISWA's groundbreaking approach will demonstrate the contribution of integrated sustainable waste management in marine litter prevention. The first conclusions and reports will be presented in Baltimore, MD USA at the [2017 ISWA World Congress](#), 25-27 September.

The report will highlight the important role of the waste management industry in marine litter abatement, adding an important dimension to the discussion.

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More information: ["Human Ingenuity Wrecks the Oceans – Can It Save Them Too?"](#), an opinion piece by Antonis Mavropoulos, ISWA President & Costas Velis, Chair of ISWA's Task Force on Marine Litter